

ROMANS 54 – CHRIST'S TWO-FOLD MINISTRY

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ROMANS 1:5-8-13

Prologue: Ὀφείλομεν – BOUND BY DUTY

- ὀφείλω *opheilo* - MEANS TO BE BOUND BY AN OBLIGATION OR DUTY TO SERVE OTHERS
 - YOU ARE NOT YOUR OWN BUT WERE BOUGHT OUT OF SIN'S SLAVERY BY CHRIST (1CO 6:19-20)
 - THIS OBLIGATION IS NOT VOLUNTARY BUT IS YOUR REASONABLE SERVITUDE TO CHRIST TYING IT BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF PAUL'S PRACTICAL LIVING OF FAITH DIVISION OF ROMANS (RO 12:1)
 - PAUL IS APPEALING TO ROMAN CONCEPTS OF DUTY AND HONOR INHERENT IN THEIR CULTURE
 - OBLIGATION OR DUTY CAN ONLY FLOW FROM THOSE WHO HAVE POWER TO THOSE WHO DO NOT HAVE POWER
 - THE DIVISION BETWEEN POWERFUL AND POWERLESS IS THE CONCEPT OF PLEASING ONE'S SELF

PROLOGUE: CHRIST DID NOT PLEASE HIMSELF

- CHRIST CAME AS A SLAVE, SUFFERED TEMPTATIONS AND TRIALS, TO DIE AS SIN FOR SINNERS WHO WERE NOT DESERVING OF MERCY THOUGH MERCY WAS GIVEN (PS 22:6, PH 2:8-9, HE 2:14-16, A1A-13)
 - CHRIST WILLINGLY DID THIS OUT OF HIS LOVE FOR US EVEN THOUGH THE REPROACHES OF MAN AGAINST THE FATHER FELL ON HIM ON THE STAUKOS (PS 40:1-12, MR 10:34-39)
 - CHRIST'S FEAR WAS NOT HIS SUFFERING FOR THE MORALLY WEAK ONES, US, BUT FEAR OF FAILING THE FATHER LESS SALVATION NOT BE OBTAINED, AND ALL REMAIN LOST (PS 69:8)
 - HIS WAS A ONE-TIME MISSION; IF HE SINNED THERE WOULD BE NO OTHER OPPORTUNITIES
 - HE PURCHASED FOR US MANY OPPORTUNITIES OF FORGIVENESS ONCE SAVED AND FOR US TO EXTEND THESE SAME OPPORTUNITIES TO OTHERS; HALLMARK OF SALVATION (MT 6:12-13, 18:21-22)

PROLOGUE: ONE VOICE WITH CHRIST

- FEAR FLOWS FROM POWERLESSNESS AND SEEKS POWER FROM THE FLESH
 - FEAR BEGETS DIVISION TEARING APART WHAT CHRIST HAS JOINED TOGETHER, HIS BODY (1:10-17)
 - FEAR JUDGES OTHERS, CAUSING DIVISION, IN HOPES OF HIDING ONE'S OWN SIN (10:2-11)
 - FEAR QUENCHES OR GRIEVES THE SPIRIT SETTING UP A POSITIVE FEEDBACK LOOP OF FEAR CREATING MORE FEAR (1P 4:30, 1Th 5:19)
- IT IS POSSIBLE TO BE ONE VOICE IN CHRIST ONLY VIA THE SPIRIT'S POWER – HARMONY
 - LOVE, PHILIA, SHARES ONE'S LEARNING WITH OTHERS ENCOURAGING THEM IN FAITH
 - THUS, ALL COME TO UNDERSTAND THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST AND SALVATION TOGETHER (1P 3:14-21, 4:11-14)

ONGOING THEME OF ROMANS

- THE DICHOTOMY OF JEW AND GENTILE HAS BEEN PAUL'S ONGOING THEME THROUGHOUT THE EPISTLE HIGHLIGHTING BOTH THEIR SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES
 - SIMILARITIES
 - BOTH ARE LOST: ONE BY THE LAW AND THE OTHER WITHOUT THE LAW
 - BOTH CAN BE SAVED: SALVATION IS THROUGH CHRIST ALONE APART FROM WORKS OF THE MORAL LAW
 - DIFFERENCES
 - FOR SEVERAL MILLENNIUM GOD HAD SET THE GENTILES ASIDE AND WORKED THROUGH THE JEWS
 - FOR SEVERAL MILLENNIUM GOD HAS SET THE JEWS ASIDE AND WORK THROUGH THE GENTILES

GENTILES NEEDED THE JEWS

- PAUL HAS SHOWN THAT SALVATION FOR THE GENTILES WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT GOD WORKING THROUGH THE JEWS BEGINNING WITH ABRAHAM
 - GOD CALLED A GENTILE AND THROUGH HIM, ABRAHAM, BEGAN TO BUILD A SEPARATED PEOPLE, JEWS
 - SALVATION BY FAITH PRECEDED THE LAW AS DID THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT: CIRCUMCISION
- PAUL ALSO WARNED THE ROMANS, GENTILES, THAT THE JEWS FELL BY PRIDEFUL SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS AND THE GENTILES COULD ALSO FALL VIA THE SAME PRIDEFULNESS
 - PRIDE CAUSED THE JEWS TO VIEW THEMSELVES AS SUPERIOR TO ALL OTHERS IN GOD'S EYES
 - PRIDE CAN ALSO LULL GENTILES TO FALL INTO THE SAME TRAP CONCERNING THE JEWS

CHRIST'S DUAL MINISTRY

- PAUL TELLS THE ROMANS, AND US, THAT CHRIST CAME WITH A DUAL MINISTRY
 - HE CAME TO ESTABLISH THE SALVATION PROMISED LONG AGO TO ABRAHAM (Gal 3:2)
 - THIS CORRESPONDS WITH THE HEBREW'S WRITER WHO WROTE THAT THE OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS DIED WITHOUT RECEIVING THE PROMISE; I.E., NEW COVENANT, NEW NATURE, SALVATION (Heb 11:13-16, 31)
 - THIS IS A GENTLE REMINDER THAT WHAT THE ROMANS HAD RECEIVED WAS TRANSMITTED BY THE **HOPE** OF THOSE WHO BELIEVED BUT HAD NOT RECEIVED AND GOD WAS NOT ASHAMED TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THEM THROUGH THEIR **FAITH**
 - THIS IS A CHALLENGE TO THE ROMANS, AND US, TO LIVE WORTHY OF THEIR SACRIFICE SINCE WE HAVE THE PROMISE, THE INDWELLING SPIRIT, GIVING US THE VERY MIND OF GOD WHICH THEY LACKED (NOTICE THAT GOD IDENTIFIED WITH THEM THEN; THEY WILL RECEIVE THE SPIRIT LATER)

DID CHRIST COME TO SAVE GENTILES?

- WAS PAUL CORRECT, DID CHRIST COME TO SAVE BOTH JEWS AND GENTILES OR WAS HE EMBELLISHING THE TRUTH TO SUPPORT HIS POINT?
- MAP DEPICTS THE POLITICAL SPHERES EXTANT IN CHRIST'S DAY; JEWS CONCENTRATED IN JUDEA AND GALILEE
- GENTILES CONTROLLED ALL OTHER AREAS: SAMARIA, SYRO-PHOENICIA AND DECAPOLIS PERTINENT TO OUR DISCUSSION
- WE WILL LOOK AT SEVERAL INTERACTIONS OF CHRIST WITH GENTILES TO UNDERSTAND PAUL'S STATEMENT



FAITH OF THE CANAANITISH WOMAN

- CHRIST TRAVELED TO THE SYRO-PHOENICIA REGION; SPECIFICALLY TYRE AND SIDON ON THE MEDITERRANEAN COAST; I.E., GENTILE REGION (Mt 15:21-28)
 - ALEXANDER THE GREAT LAID SIEGE TO THE ISLAND CITY OF TYRE, BUILDING A LAND BRIDGE AND DEMOLISHING THE CITY 332 B.C.; THUS, THIS WAS A HEAVILY HELLENIZED REGION OVERLAYING ANCIENT CANAANITE PAGANISMS (BRINGING SOPHISTICATION TO THE LOCAL HICKS)
 - CANAANITISH WOMAN BEGGED JESUS TO HEAL HER DAUGHTER OF A DEMON; CHRIST IGNORED HER BUT SHE PERSISTED UNTIL THE APOSTLES BEGGED HIM TO SEND HER AWAY
 - CHRIST SAID HE WAS SENT TO THE LOST SHEEP OF ISRAEL AND NOT TO GENTILE DOGS, SHE DID NOT TAKE OFFENSE AT THIS SLUR BUT CONTINUED THE METAPHOR ESTABLISHING HER REQUEST ON FAITH AND NOT SIMPLY ON SIGNS; ON THIS BASIS CHRIST HEALED HER DAUGHTER (Mt 15:28)

HEALING CENTURION'S SLAVE

- CENTURION CAME TO CHRIST ASKING HIM TO HEAL HIS SLAVE WHO WAS PARALYZED AND IN CONTINUAL TORMENT (MT 8:5-13)
 - PROBABLY VIA AN ACCIDENT THAT LEFT HIS SPINAL CORD PARTIALLY TRANSECTED
 - ROMAN OFFICIAL TRAINED TO BELIEVE EVERYTHING ROMAN SUPERIOR TO JEWISH CULTURE
 - HIS HELPLESSNESS AND HIS PHILIA FOR HIS SLAVE CAUSED HIM TO SEEK OUT JESUS, THE EMBODIMENT OF JEWISHNESS CONTRASTING THE IMPOTENCE OF ROMAN SUPERIORITY
 - CHRIST OFFERED TO COME AND HEAL THE SLAVE, HOWEVER, THE ROMAN WAS SENSITIVE TO JEWISH SENSIBILITIES AND DECLINED SAYING ALL JESUS HAD TO DO WAS SPEAK
 - JESUS COMMENDED HIS FAITH, A GENTILE, ABOVE THAT OF ANY JEW HE HAD ENCOUNTERED

TEN LEPERS HEALED; ONE SAVED

- AS JESUS WAS TRAVELING THROUGH SAMARIA, VERBOTEN TO JEWS, HE ENCOUNTERED TEN LEAPERS; THIS MADE THEM BEGGARS AND OUTCASTS OF SOCIETY (LK 17:11-19)
 - LEPERS CRIED OUT CALLING HIM "MASTER" SIGNIFYING HIS AUTHORITY OVER THEM, I.E., JEWS
 - THEY BEGGED HIM TO HEAL THEM OF THEIR LEPROSY; I.E., PICTURE OF SIN IN THE BIBLE
 - JESUS TOLD THEM FOLLOW MOSES' LAW, GO TO THE PRIESTS; THEY WERE HEALED AS THEY WENT
 - ONE WAS A GENTILE, WHEN HE NOTICED HE WAS HEALED HE RETURNED TO WORSHIP CHRIST
 - THE NINE, PRESUMABLY JEWS, CONTINUED TO BE BOUND TO THE LAW; THE GENTILE, IN FAITH, RETURNED TO WORSHIP GOD WHO HEALED HIM, RETURNING HIM TO A RENEWED LIFE
 - GENTILES HAD NO EXPECTATION OF MERCY; JEWS HAD NO SENSE OF GRACE, GOD OWED THEM

SAMARITAN WOMAN OUTCAST BY EVERYONE

- CHRIST TRAVELED THROUGH SAMARIA AND STOPPED BY A WELL WHILE HIS APOSTLES WENT INTO THE VILLAGE TO BUY FOOD; THERE CHRIST ENCOUNTERED A LONE WOMAN (JO 4:1-42)
 - THE WOMAN WAS ALONE AT THE WELL SHOWING SHE WAS AN OUTCAST OF HER VILLAGE JUST AS THE SAMARITANS WERE OUTCASTS BY THE JEWS
 - SHE IS INTELLIGENT AND EAGER TO ASK ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES OF THEIR RELIGIONS
 - CHRIST DEMONSTRATES HE IS GOD; SHE BELIEVES AND TELLS THE VILLAGERS WHO COME AND HEAR
 - JESUS MAKES TWO OBSERVATIONS CONFRONTING PREJUDICES OF JEWS AND SAMARITANS
 - FUTURE CENTER OF WORSHIP WOULD NOT BE IN A PLACE BUT IN EACH HEART (JE 31:31-34; AC 2:14-21)
 - FIELDS WHITE UNTO HARVEST ARE THE SAMARITANS WHICH HIS JEWISH APOSTLES WERE OVERLOOKING

DEMONIC OF GERASENES

- JESUS TRAVELS TO DECAPOLIS AREA TO ENCOUNTER A DEMON POSSESSED MAN (MK 5:1-20)
 - AREA SETTLED BY ALEXANDER'S VETERANS, THUS HELLENIZED; SOPHISTICATED OVER THE JEWS
 - CONTROLLED BY JEWS DURING THE MACCABEAN REVOLT ERA BUT NOW CONTROLLED BY ROME
 - INTERMIXING OF JEW AND GENTILE WITH JEWS HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY GENTILES
 - MAN DEMON POSSESSED AND LIVING AMONG THE TOMBS; UNCLEAN INSIDE AND OUT
 - LACK OF ADHERENCE TO JEWISH LAWS RESULT IN DEGRADATION OF BELIEF IN GOD'S SALVATION
 - DEMON LEGION SENT INTO PIGS BEING KEPT BY THE JEWS DESPITE THE PROHIBITION WHICH STAMPEDED INTO THE SEA OF GALILEE
 - CHRIST LEFT THE HEALED MAN AS A WITNESS TO THE VILLAGERS WHO REJECTED HIM: WHITE FIELDS

JESUS DID GO TO THE GENTILES

- JESUS FREQUENTLY WENT TO THE GENTILES EVEN THOUGH HIS **FIRST** PRIORITY WAS TO THE LOST SHEEP OF ISRAEL; PAUL FOLLOWED THIS SAME EMPHASIS VISITING SYNAGOGUES BEFORE GOING TO THE GENTILES IN EVERY CITY HE VISITED
 - JESUS OFTEN PERFORMED HIS MIRACLES ON THE JEWS WHO COULD REFERENCE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIC MIRACLES; THIS DID NOT ALWAYS LEAD TO SAVING FAITH (NINE LEPERS)
 - JESUS TESTED GENTILES TEACHING THEM THAT FAITH IN HIM AS GOD IS WHAT ANSWERED THEIR REQUESTS FOR MERCY AND NOT SIMPLY MIRACLES FOR MIRACLES SAKE
 - GENTILES MORE OFTEN RESPONDED IN FAITH WHILE JEWS HAD THE EXPECTATION THAT GOD WAS SUPPOSED TO DO FOR THEM SINCE THEY WERE CHOSEN PEOPLE; UNREPENTANT (MT 3:7-9)

HEALED BUT NOT SAVED AT BETHESDA POOL

- JESUS' HEALING OF THE PARALYTIC AT BETHESDA POOL BEST EXEMPLIFIES JEWISH SOPHISTRY (JO 5:1-18)
 - JEWISH PARAPLEGIC MAN LAY AT BETHESDA POOL LABORING UNDER THE SUPERSTITION THAT ANYONE WHO ENTERED THE STIRRING WATERS FIRST WOULD BE HEALED; HE WAITED 38 YEARS
 - MAN WHINED THAT NO ONE WOULD CARRY HIM INTO THE WATERS; TOOK NO RESPONSIBILITY
 - JESUS HEALED HIM, TELLING HIM TO TAKE UP HIS PALLET AND WALK; HE DID, ON THE SABBATH
 - LATER JESUS CONFRONTED HIM TELLING HIM TO SIN NO MORE LEST WORST FATE OCCUR, IMPLIES THE ORIGINAL ISSUE WAS HIS RESPONSIBILITY AND NOT SIMPLY SOME RANDOM OCCURRENCE
 - MAN RETURNED TO THE PRIESTS IDENTIFYING JESUS AS HIS HEALER ON THE SABBATH, HENCEFORTH THEY PERSECUTED HIM: EXAMPLE OF JEWS BEING KEPT CAPTIVE TO THEIR SIN AND REJECTING GOD

CHRIST THE LIGHT TO THE GENTILES

- CHRIST HAD A DUAL MINISTRY AS PAUL STATED
 - GOD SWORE BY TWO IMMUTABLE THINGS TO FULFILL HIS OATHS TO ABRAM (HE 6:15-20)
 - FIRST WAS HIMSELF SINCE HE COULD NOT LIE (JA 1:7, 10-18)
 - SECOND WAS CHRIST, GOD, WHO IS THE VERY IMAGE OF GOD AND SECURED OUR SALVATION (JO 14:6-11)
 - CHRIST WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO ENCOUNTER GENTILES SHOWING HIS APOSTLES THAT SALVATION WAS NOT JUST FOR THE JEWS BUT FOR ALL WHO BELIEVE, FULFILLING SCRIPTURE
 - PAUL SHOWS VIA ISAIAH THAT SALVATION CAME THROUGH THE JEWS AS JESUS WAS THE ROOT OF JESSE, PRECEDED DAVID, AND WILL ALSO RULE OVER THE GENTILES AND THE JEWS (IS 11:1, 9-10)
 - AS THE SAMARITAN STATED, "WE KNOW THAT THIS IS INDEED THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD" (JO 4:42)

UNITY IS NOT SIMPLY PAULINE JARGON

- CHRIST DID NOT COME TO CAUSE DIVISION BUT TO UNIFY ALL IN HIMSELF
 - HE SAID, "COME TO ME, ALL WHO LABOR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST" (MT 11:28)
 - THIS REST, SALVATION IS BASED SOLELY ON THE WORK OF CHRIST
 - THIS CALL FOR UNITY RUNS THROUGHOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT AS PAUL'S SELECTION OF VERSES DEMONSTRATE: DEUTERONOMY, 2 SAMUEL, PSALMS, AND ISAIAH
 - JEWS HAVE RESISTED THIS UNITY THROUGHOUT THEIR HISTORY EVEN DOWN TO TODAY
 - GENTILES REJECTED UNITY IN REACTION TO PHARISAICAL HOSTILITY WHICH CHRIST NEVER DID
 - THESE DIVISIONS BRING DEATH EXPERIENCED BY CHRIST, STEPHEN AND PAUL

EPILOGUE: ONGOING THEME OF ROMANS

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RELIGIONS DIVIDE

- RELIGIONS, WORKS-BASED, DIVIDE BASED ON PRIVATE INTERPRETATIONS THAT EXONERATE THE PRACTITIONER
 - SATAN'S ALWAYS ISOLATES TRUE BELIEVERS AS INTOLERANT TO EXCUSE SIN
 - THE ESSENCE OF UNGODLINESS IS REJECTION OF ALL THAT FLOWS FROM GOD (JO 1:18)
 - GOD'S GOSPEL UNIFIES ACROSS CULTURES AND ETHNICITIES TO CREATE UNITY WITH DIVERSITY
- TRUTH ALSO DIVIDES; THERE IS NO ALLOWANCE FOR UNTRUTH (MT 23:16, 622-24; JO 1:10, 9:17)
 - TRUTH IS THE LIGHT THAT REVEALS THE DARKNESS OF UNTRUTH
 - DARKNESS ALWAYS SEEKS TO SNUFF OUT THE LIGHT TO RETAIN ITS DARKNESS
 - BATTLE AS ALWAYS IS WHERE DO YOU STAND? STRONG IN DARKNESS OR WEAK IN THE LIGHT